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CRITIC COMPLIMENTS

Anti-Smoking Ads Winning Acclaim

By RICK DU BROW

HOLLYWOOD — (UPI) — Televiewers have surely noticed the excellence of the home screen's anti-cirgarette commercials.

But no one thus far has summarized their effectiveness as well as Carroll Carroll, the resident expert on television advertising and commercials for "Variety."

In a superbly informal and incisive article, the kind for which "Variety" is famous, Carroll writes:

"THE PUBLIC service anti-cigarette commercials grow better and better while the butts plugs, coming one after the other in rapid succession, grow less and less convincing."

Carroll notes that "the odds are, by agreement, 3 to 1 in favor of the (tobacco) industry. Three cigarette spots for every warning. How come?

WELL, when both sides sat down with the FCC and TV management to hammer out a schedule that would allow everybody to make money and save face, an attorney for the FCC, when asked what he thought would be a fair formula for TV to follow in running the anti-cigarette blurbs, ad libbed the 3-to-1 ratio and the industry grabbed it."

Among the effective anti-smoking ads that Carroll cites is the one "that opens (and closes) on a man standing with a cigarette in his hand.

HE LOOKS at it thoughtfully, then at you, and says, 'Have you ever thought what happens to you when you light a cigarette? (pause.) We have.' The next thing you see is the logo for the American Heart association."

Carroll is deadly in singling out the trivial approach of cigarette ads as opposed to the gut-hitting anti-smoking commercials. For example, after observing that "Winston gives you the hot tip that 'it tastes good like a cigarette should,'" the article continues:

"In answer to all this the Cancer society and Heart association go right on socking it to you about what goes on in your guts while you enjoy a smoke that's one silly millimeter longer, walk a mile for a Camel, or become a chainsmoker because you asked the man next door if he saved Raleigh coupons and he said, 'That's how I got my new wife.'"

CARROLL suggests:

"Take a look at that anti-cigarette western. The killers enter a saloon. Everyone hides. The men light their cigarettes. Then they start to cough . . . and cough and cough and cough and cough till it's clear who the killers really are. It's a perfect parody and a pretty good parable."

It is worth it to get the latest issue of "Variety" just to read the Carroll article — and to pass it around. Carroll is everything a critic should be: Intelligent, entertaining, insouciant, a bit of a crusader —and a harpoonist to be reckoned with, as witness the following:

"There's another new cigarette on the market, Virginia Slims, that claims to be made just for women and to have the flavor women like best—Virginia.

This information was probably attained by hanging around grapejuice joints counting the dames who asked for Virginia Dare."

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/nmjk0000